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ABSTRACT

This paper, one of a series of reports describing innovative practices in integrating people with disabilities into community life, describes the Lynch Community Homes in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Lynch Homes is a for-profit organization that provides homes and supportive services for approximately 75 people with severe and profound developmental disabilities in 25, three-person homes. Recounted are the origins of the family owned endeavor, growth as a result of closing of a nearby large institution, and a philosophy which stresses design of services for particular individuals and a lifetime commitment to the residents. Also recounted are reasons for the three-person limitation and comments of direct care staff. The organizational structure, which allows for a high degree of observation of direct care staff and clients by administrative level personnel is presented. Briefly reviewed are staff recruitment procedures, community resistance, habilitation programs, finances, day programs and work. Stressed are the family model on which the homes are based and an emphasis on integration and outside relationships. Current problems faced by the homes are identified including those associated with recent expansion, leadership succession, lack of day/work programs, and lack of client relationships with non-agency people. (DB)

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Center on Human Policy

THE CARING BUSINESS:

LYNCH COMMUNITY HOMES

WILLOW GROVE, PENNSYLVANIA

EC 300 657

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The Caring Business:
Lynch Community Homes
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania

A case study

by

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1988

This is one in a series of reports on programs and services that support people with severe disabilities in the community. The purpose of the series is not to evaluate programs or services, but rather to describe innovative practices in integrating people with disabilities into community life.

Introduction

Just outside the city limits of Philadelphia, in a town called Willow Grove, is an attractive new two story office building. As the heavy wooden sign with engraved gold letters out front indicates, the building serves as the main office for Lynch Homes. Lynch Homes is a for-profit organization that provides homes and supportive services for approximately 75 people with severe and profound developmental disabilities. The people live in 25, three-person homes dispersed in the Montgomery County area.

Henry Lynch's office is on the second floor. He is the owner and chief administrator of the organization. In a reception area outside his office, on two well-lit walls, is an arrangement of plaques, pictures and certificates which are a tribute to his parents, and the founders of Lynch Homes, Thomas and Blanche Lynch.

In the center of the arrangement is a framed black and white photograph of Thomas and Blanche as they appeared shortly before the father's death at age 82. Their grey hair and confident smiles attest to the pleasure they received from engaging in their long life work of providing the care that won them the accolades captured on the plaques and certificates on the walls.

THE AMERICAN PEDIATRIC FOUNDATION, PRESENTED TO THOMAS AND BLANCHE LYNCH, IN RECOGNITION OF A LIFETIME OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN, OCTOBER 11, 1975.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED, RESIDENTIAL SERVICE AWARD, PRESENTED TO THE LYNCH HOMES, FOR PROVIDING QUALITY COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES TO PEOPLE WHO ARE SEVERELY AND PROFOUNDLY MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED, JUNE 1, 1982.

1984 PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR RESIDENCES FOR THE RETARDED, PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS, THE HUMANITARIAN AWARD TO BLANCHE AND THOMAS LYNCH.

The recognition continues on from plaque to certificate, from certificate to plaque, and daily in conversations between Lynch Homes staff.

While I approached this case study of the Lynch Homes with the intent of focusing on the theme of service provider as entrepreneur--the for-profit provider--I soon realized that this business had traditions, ideals, and heroes serving as guides that transcended simple notions of capitalistic profit motives and money before people. Henry Lynch is the head of a for-profit corporation but his parents established a tradition which guides the enterprise with humane values and a service orientation that is difficult to find in government service establishments or other non-profit organizations.

History

The story of the Lynch parents' engagement in their life work of providing care for chronically ill, severely and profoundly mentally retarded children with multiple disabilities is a story of an American family's struggle for survival and to

find meaning in their lives. Thomas Lynch arrived in the United States in 1919 from Ireland. He obtained a college degree from Trinity College and taught history and worked for a newspaper for a while. Blanche was a registered nurse at Bellevue Hospital in New York City in the 1920s.

Blanche remembers a very young patient she took care of at Bellevue. The child had multiple disabilities, severe mental retardation, and a need for constant medical care. As she recalls: "One Sunday evening, a man, the child's father, was walking around the child's crib and crying." Unable to care for the child at home, the man's grief stemmed from his concern that his child would be sent to the large state institution, the preferred treatment at the time. Blanche continued: "I went home that night and told my husband that (if the opportunity arose), we should open our home and care for these children." Three months after the incident, Thomas Lynch was struck with a heart attack and was forced to give up his job. Shortly after the couple moved to Philadelphia where a friend of Mrs. Lynch, also a nurse, was already involved with in-home care for severely mentally handicapped children.

In April of 1934 the Lynches moved into a house in Willow Grove with their infant daughter, and four medically fragile severely developmentally disabled infants they had been licensed to care for by the state. After that, the number of children Mr. and Mrs. Lynch cared for in their home ranged from six to sixteen. There were always a number of children with Tay-Sach's disease, and, in the days before shunt operations, two or three

with pronounced hydrocephalus. Many of the children died, but a few with a hopeless prognosis lived and developed skills beyond anyone's expectations. The Lynches later had two other children. All of the Lynch children were raised in the same home where their parents were caring for the children with severe medical problems and disabilities. They lived like a large family. They ate together, celebrated together and, when one of the medically fragile children died, they mourned together. Blanche Lynch recalls how supportive the neighbors were of their efforts. "They even came in and helped us."

Henry Lynch describes his childhood by saying that he had a lot of brothers and sisters. Some of his first companions were children with severe disabilities. While not verbose when talking about his values and orientation to his business, Henry points to the importance of growing up in the Lynch home and observing the compassion his mother and father showed to the children and their families in shaping his outlook. Long before "integration" and "normalization" were part of the common vocabulary of service providers the Lynches were keeping medically fragile children and severely developmentally delayed children out of institutions, and including them in their family and integrating them into their neighborhood. They honored each child and treated each as a worthy and important individual. Henry did not internalize his sense of and approach to service from professional workshops or university courses, he grew up with it.

In 1969, Henry's father's health was failing and the business needed help. Henry had just graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and was planning to pursue graduate studies in comparative literature on a fellowship. Henry volunteered to help with the home for the summer vowing that he would never do it for a living. He violated his pledge. Henry never left his parents' business. For years he managed the original Willow Grove home. In 1977 he opened his first small community residence two miles from the original site. Another home soon followed and by 1980 he was managing six in all. Lynch Homes clientele changed from exclusively serving children to serving people of any age and from people who required 24 hour nursing care to people who were severely disabled with serious medical needs but which could be tended to on an on call basis (Lynch Homes now employs two full time registered nurses who are available around the clock).

All that the Lynches did by instinct would not fall within the practices that progressive modern day practitioners would point to as "good." His parents were very religious and thought of the children they cared for as "holy innocents." When the demand for their services increased they opened their house to up to sixteen severely disabled children, a number which inhibited the practice of being just like a family. Henry is more in tune with current practices and his vision of service is more humanitarian than religious.

In the early days Henry was the janitor, electrician, manager and direct care worker. As he hired staff he began

assembling a group of dedicated employees who later became significant in the administration of the program. They grew up with the organization and had personal experience with the philosophy and ambience of the original Lynch Homes.

By the late 1970s the integration movement was well under way in the field of developmental disabilities. Leaders, parents and clients were advocating for the demise of institutions and the development of integrated community services. In Pennsylvania the integration movement focused on Pennhurst State School and Hospital in the Eastern part of the state.

Opened in 1908, during the ascent of the eugenics movement, Pennhurst was designed to isolate those labeled retarded and epileptic from the community. Originally built for 500 people, the 400 acre facility grew until it consisted of 85 buildings housing 3,200 inmates. Amid documented cases of patient abuse and neglect and a class action law suit which was filed in 1974, a federal judge ordered Pennhurst closed in 1977. Testimony given in conjunction with the law suit showed how residents at Pennhurst regressed, rather than progressed: that they received little training, spent most of their days idle; that they received massive doses of psychotropic drugs; and that they were frequently restrained, abused and neglected. By the fall of 1987 the last residents had been moved out and the facility turned over to the Veterans Administration.

From 1979 until the last residents were evacuated, the closing of Pennhurst largely explains the growth of Lynch Homes. Twenty eight of the 75 people who live in the Lynch community

homes are former Pennhurst residents. As the population of the state facility went down, the residents remaining at Pennhurst were those with the most severe problems, those other agencies wouldn't take. Personnel from Lynch Homes were asked to visit the facility and consult with the staff about some hard to place residents. To the Pennhurst staff's surprise the Lynch Homes staff said that they would serve them. Why not? The remaining Pennhurst residents were not significantly different from residents they were already serving. And besides, with the exception of people who need 24 hour medical care, it was the Lynch Homes policy to take those people with severe developmental disabilities who no one else would take.

Indeed, the Pennhurst story is an important part of the history, spirit and soul of Lynch Homes. It is with great pride that staff talk about residents who moved from terrible, dehumanizing, institutional conditions to the comfortable single family humanizing environments they presently live in. In their records they have impressive documentation of the changes in the former Pennhurst residents--people who could not stand, now walk; people who were always in diapers now use the bathroom; people who were once fed lying down now eat with little assistance sitting in a chair at a table in a dining room; a man who once weighed 82 lbs. now weighs 120. Conversations among staff often contain stories of how a particular resident changed since leaving Pennhurst. When new employees are introduced to the residents they will work with, stories of Pennhurst, and the residents' pre-Lynch Homes life abound. In the Lynch Homes office

building, just outside the Director of Program's office, is an attractive photograph of Lou, the first Pennhurst resident to Lynch Homes. He is of important symbolic meaning for the staff. The progress he has made, the journey he has taken, the quality of his life exemplify what the staff of Lynch Homes are most proud of. They feel they have taken people who have lived in hell and have given them opportunity.

A few days prior to my visit to Lynch Homes the Program Director had received a letter from one of the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia lawyers who had been involved with the Pennhurst case. She had visited some of the Lynch Homes residents who had left Pennhurst and wanted to thank the Program Director for her hospitality and for what Lynch Homes has accomplished. She said:

> To say I was overwhelmed in spirit, and deeply moved to see the progress that Dave Manhant, Marty Winkman, and Carla Henry* have made since leaving Pennhurst would be an understatement. You have worked miracles in these persons' lives...
>
> I was extremely impressed by the obvious thought, care and attention to detail that has gone into these programs; by the multitude of activities in these severely handicapped individuals' lives; and by the ease with which your staff incorporate specialized therapies and positioning into everyday activities...

*pseudonyms

> It is obvious that the high quality of your services are due not only to competence and hard work (and to agency practices that ensure accountability), but also to your values and firm belief in the dignity and worth of each individual.

In the early 1970s I visited many institutions like Pennhurst. I saw men and women who had been in institutions all their lives; non-ambulatory residents confined to cribs and carts; young people in seclusion or in strait jackets; and people so drugged that they couldn't stay awake. In the faces of the ex-Pennhurst residents I saw the faces of the countless others I had seen in those grim institutions. As I observed, I too was moved. I met men and women living in suburban neighborhoods, in nice homes, engaging in activities--dignity intact--who had spent 50 years and more in the asylums of this country. I saw young women and men who had spent their lives confined to carts and cribs in impersonal day rooms engaged in meaningful activities and living in a house just like I live in. For anyone who doubts the efficacy of deinstitutionalization and the progress that has been made over the past 20 years, the proof is in the Lynch Homes residences I visited around Willow Grove.

Henry's Point of View

Henry Lynch is an unassuming man in his early 40s. He does not drive an expensive car or wear expensive clothes, or talk about "deals" he has been involved in. He talks about his parents and people with severe disabilities he has known. He

doesn't fit the stereotype of the successful business man. While at one time Henry Lynch vowed not to go into the business, he now says: "it was the best thing that ever happened to me." He sees Lynch Homes as his life work, a mission rather than a business. He revels in the autonomy he has. He is his own boss and has no board of directors, or government bureaucrat overseeing him. He believes organizations work best with that form of administration.

While Lynch Homes is now "Lynch Community Homes, Inc.", it still has some of the feel of a family operation. Eighty-three-year-old Blanche, whose activity level has been curtailed by a heart attack, until recently did the payroll and consulted with staff on particular clients. His brother Tom is employed by the business and Henry's wife and 3 children participate.

According to his employees Henry's approach is to be concerned with the details and to focus on the clients. He misses the time when he had day-to-day contact with the residents but says he never wants to lose the sense of who the organization is for.

Henry's philosophy and operating principles are not very complicated. Developmentally disabled people deserve a full life, a chance to reach their potential, to be happy and to live in the community. Residences and services should be designed for particular people--people should not have to adapt to the facility. To serve a person is to be committed to that person for life. People who become Lynch residents rarely are transferred out because of aggressive behavior or because the

staff can't handle them. Occasionally people who make significant progress in self-care skills move to a "less restrictive" setting but Henry's goal is to provide a permanent home, not a stop-over on the continuum of services. There are many programs that serve the mild and moderately disabled, Lynch Homes only serves those others reject.

Does the organization profit? Sure, Henry says, any business that is going to stay in business must make a profit. Does it make an exorbitant profit? Henry points out that most businesses the size of his make more profit than his operation has the potential of making. He says that he could make a lot more in some other line of work, but he is interested in the people he serves and the preservation of the Lynch tradition. In a quip that points out his service orientation he told me: "I just wouldn't enjoy owning and managing a cement factory." He also points out that smart business in human services is very compatible with the idea of quality services. The better you do what you are supposed to do, the more referrals you get. He says that the quality of services he provides speak for itself, and he would not waste his time talking in abstractions about how for-profit agencies are inherently flawed. Henry sees that distinction between a for-profit and not-for-profit agency overdrawn. He points out that he receives no more from the county for each resident that any other agency receives, and he provides better and more services for the price. Also, under Pennsylvania guidelines, Lynch Homes is limited in how much profit it can make (3% of the budget) and that is the same as it is for non-profit organizations.

Expanding Too Fast?

I asked Henry Lynch and other administrative personnel if they didn't think that it was a mistake for the agency to have expanded so rapidly in the 1980s. Was Lynch Homes ready for such expansion? Whether it was or was not, they feel that they were the best, if not the only, community residence organization that could have taken the last of the Pennhurst residents. The need was so great, the plight of the Pennhurst residents was so compelling, that they did not have the luxury of deciding whether they should expand or not.

Henry is a little impatient with abstract questions like "Is there an optimal size for a human service agency?" As with the question of "Can a non-profit organization provide good service?" he points to the quality of service in his agency as providing the concrete answer to the question. He feels that Lynch Homes is providing exemplary service to difficult to serve residents and that optimal size is a theoretical issue. Henry Lynch also points out that when Lynch Homes began to expand he had over ten years of experience operating residential programs and that he had good people working for him. He had the experience, the seasoning, and the people before the expansion and that made all the difference.

Three to a Home

While Henry Lynch was opening his community residences, group homes with five, six, seven and even more residents were opening around the country. Homes of that size have fallen out

of favor because of their tendency to become mini-institutions. Why did he limit his to three? After they had begun opening three person residences, Henry understood why facilities with a small number of people were effective in improving the lives of developmentally disabled people. With only three to a house, the company vehicle assigned to each home could be a car and not a van. Vans are more expensive and promote large groups of disabled people going on outings together, a situation not conducive to integration. In addition, the employees of Lynch Homes felt that with more than three residents it was difficult to maintain a sense of being in a home. It was difficult to eat together and there wasn't enough down time. But these are not the reasons that they started with the number three. They began developing homes for three because under the Life Safety Code for the area, residences with more than three disabled residents who could not leave a residence on their own, had to meet more restrictive building regulations--sprinkler systems, fire escapes, etc.--that were expensive, prohibited in some of the homes they rented, and not conducive to creating a home-like environment.

Staff

It was obvious, even after a short visit, that staff liked the residents. They were genuinely warm to them and engaged them in activities and communication. When I asked one staff person whether she enjoyed her work she told me:

> I love it. It's so exciting it just is hard to explain. It is a wonderful experience to see people do things for the

> first time--the first time ever that they've felt grass or the ocean. A little girl yesterday who we just took from an institution. We took her for a swim yesterday. The look on her face in that pool. She was just so happy floating around. Makes you feel good.

Supervisors expect a lot from the staff. One supervisor told me that if the direct staff are not enthusiastic about the work they don't stay long.

> We tend to drive them out. We expect a lot especially for what we pay. But they might as well do it lovingly and cheerfully. You can make it a good job. We don't tolerate people sitting around and watching television.

While supervisors and administrators think that direct care staff can improve with experience they also think that treating all people like human beings, seeing the residents as people, comes naturally to some. I was told that a week prior to my visit one senior staff member was working with staff at one of the Lynch homes when one of the new employees said to her that she thought they ought to have bibs on the elderly residents who live in the home. The senior staff judged the new staff member as insensitive. The senior staff member said the new staff person had difficulty seeing the residents as people. After all she continued,

> ...that old man could be your grandfather. No reason you can't just change the shirt after the meal. We try to keep the environment so the people have dignity. For an elder person to have a bib on isn't dignified.

Staff are expected to engage the clients, to be attuned to their needs, and to hold those needs above the staff's need for coffee or leisure. The administrative staff hire and keep only people who are energetic and who willingly participate in a wide variety of activities with the residents. Many direct service level staff plan and prepare meals, clean house, take residents on outings, arrange parties, do physical therapy and other forms of programming. The Program Director told me of an incident that happened the week I visited that illustrates what administration require of their direct care staff. The program director was attempting to show a new employee how to get a resident to do an exercise that was designed to improve his range of motion. The employee told the Director that she was only getting paid $5.30 an hour, and someone like a therapist ought to be doing what the Program Director was teaching the new employee to do. The Program Director, speaking of the incident said: "Well she's no longer with us. It doesn't take long to pick up that a person has a bad attitude."

The Program Director said "we tend to hire people who share the Lynch Homes' philosophy; that is, the resident comes first."

Administrative staff have a sense of their place in history. They realize that they have been pioneers in providing community-based living for severely disabled people. Some go out to other communities and give presentations and slide shows telling about what they have done and how they did it. In this way administrative staff feel that their impact transcends the work they are doing with particular residents in the Lynch homes.

Organizational Structure

The President of Lynch Community Homes and its Executive Director is Henry Lynch. Directly under him is a Residential Services Director, under her a Program Director, two nurses and an Assistant Residential Services Director. There are two Directors of Residences, each overseeing five of the Residential Supervisors, who each supervise two or three community residences.

Each residence has one or two house parents who reside at the home. They have relief house parents who take over house parent responsibilities on the regular house parents' days off and other times when the house parents aren't there. Lowest on the hierarchy in the organization are the client care workers. They aid the house parents and the relief house parents while they are working.

At first glance this administrative structure looks large and bureaucratically cumbersome but the structure had a number of positive aspects that seem to counter some of the potential negatives. For one, the structure leads to a great deal of observation of the direct care staff and the clients by administrative level personnel. At any time one of the eight administrative personnel above the house parents may drop in to visit a home unannounced. In fact this frequently occurs. Administrative personnel fill out a form after every visit of a residence, even if it is only for a few minutes, on which they record aspects of the residence that may have to be looked into as well as positive dimensions of what was going on. In addition

administrators are often with staff and clients on special occasions such as the vacations. Administrative staff know all of the clients and most of the direct care workers rather well. It is relatively easy to fire a staff member or to ask them to resign.

While this type of surveillance of direct care staff by administrators may sound punitive and create bad relationships between the administration and the staff, this does not seem to be the case. Administrators seem to have good relationships with staff and the frequent visits lead not only to staff being on their toes but to a feeling on the part of the staff that what they are doing is important and that the administration is interested and knowledgeable about them. The relationship between staff and administrators seems friendly, open and comfortable. While the organization is clearly hierarchical the style of the administrators is to consult with the people who are the closest to the residents before making decisions that affect them. Employees seem to feel they have an important say in what happens in their residences.

Another positive aspect about the structure of the organization is the opportunity for mobility it provides. Most of the administrative positions are filled through promotion of direct care staff. Almost all of the supervisors have been house parents. Relief house parents can become house parents and client care workers can become house parents. This mobility seems to cut down on staff turn-over although retention of staff who do not get promoted is a problem.

The house parent system, as opposed to a shift system, served to have more continuity in the residents' lives but turnover in the house parents slots occur regularly and people seem to be reluctant to take on the responsibility and life style that position requires.

Recruitment of Staff

As was just mentioned, most employees at the administrative level were promoted from below and have been with the agency for some time. This was not the case with the present Residential Services Director. This person's position is second only to Henry Lynch in the organization's hierarchy. She became known to Henry and the rest of the administrative staff in the capacity of Montgomery County Residential Services Director. Known to be effective in her county position and to share the Lynch philosophy she was invited to join the Lynch Homes staff. Since assuming her position a number of administrative changes have taken place which seem to please the other staff. A retirement benefit was just added and new administrative personnel are being hired.

Recruitment of direct care staff is more complicated. Lynch Hones advertises in the local papers for these slots but most of these positions get filled by word of mouth. The majority of the present direct care staff are young (in their 20s or early 30s), black, and residents of Philadelphia. Most have had no formal education after high school and have no four year college degrees. As I went about visiting residences I talked to the

various direct care staff asking them how they found out about their present job and how they got their present positions. In almost every reply there was a reference to a friend or relative working for Lynch Homes as being important in getting them interested in the agency. I asked a few direct care workers if they did staff recruiting for the agency. Employees said that they didn't really recruit but if they knew someone in their family or neighborhood who was looking for work, and they knew that the person was kind and caring, and liked to work hard they told them about the agency and how to go about getting a job. They said that they would not refer a friend or relative who they thought did not have the disposition to work for the Lynch Homes, that would not be good for the person referred or for the person doing the referring. This selection and preliminary screening of applicants by old staff is probably an important part of why the personnel I observed seemed so involved in their work. Of course people wouldn't recommend to friends and relatives to call the agency if they weren't at least moderately satisfied with their work, which, in spite of some turn-over problems, seems to be the case. Lynch Homes seems to have a good reputation as an employer as well as a provider of residential services.

After would-be employees call the Lynch office they are asked to come in for an interview. If the person who interviews them, usually the personnel manager, thinks that they have the potential to be good staff members, they are asked to volunteer for a few hours in the house where there is an opening. If the house parents and others who observe the potential employee think

the person would make a good staff person, they hire them. New employees who don't live up to expectations are encouraged to leave or they are fired.

Although this word of mouth method of recruiting seems to be effective, the agency always has openings because of staff turnover. The young people who work for the agency seldom stay for more than a few years unless they are promoted to supervisory positions. The longest period that a direct service worker has been a house parent is four years. House parents make approximately $5.60 an hour plus room and board. Client care workers make approximately $4.00 an hour and relief house parents make approximately $5.30 an hour. Workers do get paid overtime but do not get paid when they are at a home and no residents are present or after residents go to bed. Recently there has been a change in salary policy. Prior to the change all direct care staff holding the same position (e.g., house parents) got the same hourly wage. Now staff who are especially good at what they do are given merit raises, some as much as 20% of their salary. This differential wage system was introduced as a way of rewarding stellar employees and keeping them from leaving the agency.

Community Resistance

In general the people in the neighborhoods where Lynch Homes are located support the agency. Staff talk about neighborhood children dropping into the homes and playing with young residents and about various friendly gestures neighbors make toward Lynch

Homes. But there have been incidents in which community people have been hostile. In one upper middle class neighborhood the neighbors went to the local zoning board with a complaint that Lynch Homes was in violation of the residential zoning code--it was a business but was located in a strictly residential area. The case was settled out of court and the residence in question remains part of the Lynch Homes system. Some staff think that the resistance that is experienced in some neighborhoods is not due to having disabled people living there, rather because of racism--the neighbors don't like the idea of having young, black staff members in the predominantly white enclaves.

Programs

Each resident has an individual habilitation plan (IHP) and a formal program with explicit activities and goals. These are contained in the residents' record book which can be found in each home. While the IHPs are in the book and other official records, the books also contain many snap shots of the resident in a variety of poses and in different environments. The informal picture takes the clinical edge off the record books. While there is physical therapy and programs designed to move the resident toward some behavioral goal, programming is blended into the day. There are no behavior modification charts on the walls or rewards of the form of M&Ms or some other uniform treat. Praise and other positive reinforcement is practiced but the rewards are individualized and more spontaneous than in most behavior modification programs. The agency in policy and in

practice has a strong philosophical opposition to restrictive or aversive techniques to change unwanted behaviors. Positive intervention is always stressed. Residents do not take behavior control drugs. The Program Director in conjunction with staff works out a daily activity schedule for each resident with the IHP in mind.

IHP meetings are not just a time to develop plans for residents. They are an opportunity to build staff unity and house spirit and provide staff with ongoing education. The dynamic and highly motivated Program Director attends all IHP meetings. There is a policy that all staff who work in a particular house attend IHP meetings of residents of that house. The resident they are discussing attends also. In addition some people who are related to the resident but who aren't employed by Lynch Homes attend the meetings. At the meeting I attended of Mr. C., a former Pennhurst resident who has developed an impressive repertory of skills since joining Lynch Homes, there were two outside advocates for the resident present in addition to Lynch Homes staff. One was a county case worker monitoring the case, the other a client advocate appointed as part of the Pennhurst ruling. I was told that each ex-Pennhurst resident has three advocates--one from the county, one from the Pennhurst ruling, and one from Temple University, which is studying the results of the Pennhurst case. The monitor from Temple was not present at Mr. C.'s meeting.

At the IHP meeting I went to there were 14 people in attendance. While it may seem that 14 is too large a number to

have a meaningful IHP meeting, this was not the case. I was impressed by the level of participation of direct care workers. One particular young male employee who had a close relationship with the resident being discussed, had a deep knowledge of the resident's personality, skills and needs. He freely discussed Mr. C. in the large group. Only a person who was closely attached to another would have the understanding that this young, non-college educated man had of the elderly resident.

Finances

Money does not seem to be an issue or something that is even talked about a great deal in the Lynch organization. At the program level people had no idea of what the rent for the homes they were working in was or any other aspects of the financial arrangements. The Program Director told me that she could not ever remember Henry turning down a request for something that the residents needed or which would improve their lives that he had not approved. On the weekend after my visit to Willow Grove the residents of Lynch Homes were going to start going on vacations. Two houses had been rented on the Jersey Shore and a cabin had been secured in the Poconos. By house, staff and residents were taking turns using the facilities. They were going to use the board walk, go on rides, use the beach and eat all their meals in restaurants. No one mentioned that this was an extra expense that cut into profits, that it wasn't necessary because they didn't have to do it. Because the amount of money spent is not an issue at the program level there is no penny pinching--not

that I saw any evidence of extravagance. Henry does not run a greedy business.

Day Programs and Work

Lynch Homes children attend public school during the school year and some go to a summer school program that Lynch Homes runs. Day programs and work for adults is probably one of the weakest aspects of the Lynch Homes operation. I was told that the residents were seen by those in charge of existing day programs and sheltered workshops as being too disabled for their programs. Residents who are in a day program, 38 people, are in one operated by Lynch Homes located in its own building. The person who was my guide told me that they weren't as proud of that aspect of Lynch Homes as the residential program. Although their goal was to have as many people in supported work positions, they had not made much progress in that direction. My guide was reluctant to show me the day program and I did not push the matter.

In three of the homes the residents are elderly people who spent most of their lives at Pennhurst. While these residents take part in activities and have IHPs they are referred to as being "retired" and staying in a "retirement home." These residents, who are in their 70s, are not pushed into activities, and enjoy a quiet, slower paced life.

The Model

Lynch Homes uses a family model in organizing and thinking about their homes. Once residents are in a particular home they

remain there and form the nucleus of the family unit. As residents grow within the home, the home is adapted to their changing needs. The goal is to provide continuity and security in the lives of their residents. Discharge or movement from one home to another rarely occurs. Even though there might be staff turnover the residents and the physical home remain constant. In the model, each residence has house parents who are in charge of the home. They plan meals and buy foods, they arrange for appointments for residents and schedule and oversee the other staff who work in the house. Staff and residents eat their meals together and in other ways do things together. There are no staff bathrooms separate from residents' bathrooms. House parents have a Lynch Homes car to take residents on outings and to do the shopping, etc. Some staff, with the permission of the Program Director or Residential Service Director, have their children with them when working. Each home has its own distinct character. In some homes the furniture is predominantly antique, while in others it is modern. All homes have nice large color TVs--most were off during my visit--and VHS recorders and players. Residents' rooms were personalized also. The houses are all single family and rented. They vary greatly in size, design and location. One house was an old mansion on a country road adjacent to a race horse farm. Another was a modest new one story home in a heavily populated working class area.

Integration and Outside Relationships

All of the residences are in typical neighborhoods and through various activities residents go out into the community.

A number of the residents have memberships in the YMCA and use the swimming pool and other facilities with help of staff. Residents go to restaurants, shop in local stores and visit malls. Residents see regularly community doctors and dentists when they have problems. Residents do not engage in these activities in large groups. The largest number of residents go out singularly with a staff person. The agency has no vans.

Lynch Homes is not as concerned with residents developing relationships with relatives and people in the community (outside of agency personnel) as are some of the agencies we have visited. It is not a conscious part of their program or integration strategy. While a number of residents have regular contacts with their families, the staff at Lynch Homes is not as aggressive as some agencies are in having residents establish or maintain relationships with their natural families. This is not to force the issue. If a family indicates that they do not want contact with a resident that is respected. Similarly there is not a systematic effort to have residents form relationships with people in the community who do not work for the agency. Occasionally residents do get to know neighbors and shop owners but developing such relationships is not a part of the program. Residents have close relationships with staff and some staff have introduced residents to their family but because the staff typically do not live in the area where the Lynch homes are located, contact of this kind is limited.

Issues and Problems Being Faced by Lynch Homes

Lynch Homes is exemplary in many respects. It is an organization that I can comfortably point to as providing quality living services to people with severe developmental disabilities. They have admirably served the ex-Pennhurst residents. As with any good program there are a number of issues the organization is facing and problems that might be addressed. Below are some issues and problems that come to mind.

The rapid expansion and the size of the Lynch Homes operation may be a source of problems. The organization is having trouble in recruiting good direct care personnel for certain positions. New staff do not seem to be as in touch with the Lynch tradition as older workers and there is some question in my mind if the tradition can be kept alive in a larger organization.

A second issue is that of succession. Mr. Lynch is still a young man, but one worries about what would happen if he was not available to fill the owner/director spot. The organization is very dependent on him. There are other people in the organization who seem almost as irreplaceable as well. Particular people on the staff of Lynch Homes are an important part of its success. Could the organization do well under other leadership?

Another problem relates to the quality of the day programs. Although I did not see the day program run by Lynch Homes for 38 of its residents, day programs and work programs seem very underdeveloped in the Montgomery County area. While Lynch Homes

is providing excellent residential care the day programs seem not to be of equal quality.

A last point has to do with the extent and nature of residents of the Lynch Homes relationships with typical people in the community. Although staff seem to have very good relationships with the residents and are very active bringing them physically out in the community, very few outside ties seem to exist with non-agency people.

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